

STELLA WRIGHT HOMES HOPE VI

"TRANSFORMING TODAY'S VISION INTO TOMORROW'S REALITY"

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**ransforming
Today's Vision
Into Tomorrow's
Reality**

George Smiley, a member of the Stella Wright Homes consultative group, says it best when he expresses his sheer joy at living long enough to see the Central Ward and Stella Wright Homes transformed into a community of safe, affordable neighborhoods. Smiley has been active throughout the process, including participating on the panel to select the two developers approved by the Board of Commissioners at its January meeting.

Smiley and other residents are actively engaged in participating with HOPE VI staff in designing the vision, in defining the needs for their families to succeed and in securing case management services to address those needs. If you've not "caught the fever" yet, we trust something in this issue will cause you to reconsider your commitment to your future.

The Staff

MAYOR JAMES ANNOUNCES HOPE VI DEVELOPERS



Newark Mayor Sharpe James announces the selected developers for Stella Wright Homes HOPE VI Revitalization Project at JFK Recreational Center

At a press conference on Thursday, February 21, 2002, Newark Mayor Sharpe James and NHA Executive Director Robert Graham announced the selected developers for the \$200 million Stella Wright Homes Revitalization Project—St. James Community Partners, LLC (a joint venture between St. James AME Church & Landex Corporation) and Roizman Development Corporation.

Mayor James applauded the planning and partnering that has led the NHA to develop visions for a neighborhood of mixed-income housing built to market rate standards. Speaking from the podium at the JFK Recreational Center, a facility impacted by the Stella Wright Homes project, the Mayor added that this project "will change the Central Ward forever."

NHA Executive Director Graham said, "Today is the start of another defining moment for the Central Ward. We have the convergence of critical components of planning—public funding, citizen interest and participation with private partnership." Graham added that participation from residents, the community and faith-based organizations has allowed the Housing Authority to develop a comprehensive plan for "the revitalization of the Central Ward with appropriate new and refurbished schools, improved infrastructure and reintegrated institutions."

Graham said that the Stella Wright Homes project continues the milestones begun by the Housing Authority in the 1990s. "During this time, the Newark Housing Authority built 1,250 townhouse apartments and increased the number of families it houses by over 30% to approximately 11,500 families."

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WE'RE MAKING PROGRESS

- *Former Stella Wright Homes (SWH) residents received "Outstanding Achievement Awards" for their participation in the Women & Minorities Construction Training Program (WMCT) and the Mayor's PRIDE cleanup program. The recognition came at a public rally on Wednesday, March 28. There are currently 22 former SWH residents employed in PRIDE and six participating in WMCT.*
- *The February 21, 2002, press conference to announce the selected developers was attended by over 75 people eager to hear the good news about the Stella Wright Homes Revitalization Plan (see coverage of this historic event on front page, pages 4 photo gallery, and page 6 interview with George Smiley).*
- *Former SWH residents toured the HOPE VI sites in Paterson and Camden recently. These bus tours were arranged by Resident Liaison Doris McCray-Crank. Residents who participated in the tours were very impressed with the HOPE VI construction in the Paterson and Camden developments. Their tour included both rental and home ownership units which impressed them in their design and layout.*

FROM THE DESK OF THE ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In January, the NHA Board of Commissioners selected developers for the 45-acre Stella Wright Homes HOPE VI Revitalization Project (see page 4). Since then, the HOPE VI staff has been busier than ever:

- ◊ Working with the developers to create schedules for all phases of the project;
- ◊ Ensuring that the conceptual design guidelines developed through your input and that of other stakeholders are translated into the plans that the developers are putting together;
- ◊ Meeting with critical agencies in the City, schools and community to finalize the details of their support for this project; and
- ◊ Meeting with residents

to continue their engagement in this exciting venture.

At a meeting between the residents and developers in March, I stated my firm belief that participation in this HOPE VI project is a once-in-a-life time opportunity. Those who step up to the plate get to assist the developers in making critical decisions about townhouse styles, bedroom sizes, apartment layout, property management guidelines and a host of other elements that will affect the quality of life for not only the former Stella Wright Homes residents but for all who will live in these dwellings—renters and homeowners alike. It is an opportunity to "make a difference" in how your community will look and to create a community that will thrive through generations.

NEXT STEPS

- ☐ April 27, 2002 Stella Wright South buildings will be imploded.
- ☐ May 11, 2002 Stella Wright North buildings will be imploded.

In addition to the new housing, HOPE VI staff is reaching out to every lease compliant resident who was at Stella Wright on the date of the HOPE VI application to advise them that they have choices regarding their selection of housing including:

- public housing,
- townhouses,
- Section 8,
- returning to the Stella Wright area
- and homeownership.

In addition, all former SWH residents are eligible for a host of social service, educational and job training opportunities to become self-sufficient. If you or someone you know have not taken advantage of the opportunity to participate in the development process with the HOPE VI staff and the mobility counseling services, take a minute today to call LST Group at 973-642-8000. Or call Doris McCray-Crank, resident liaison (973-430-2249), to volunteer for a committee or program that will be presented in the future.



Shown here during HOPE VI bus trip to Camden are (far left) former Stella Wright Homes residents Sandra Harris and (far right) Elena Harris with their children.

Karen Torian

HELPFUL HINTS FROM SHEILA: HOW TO BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

Neighborhoods are built upon the good will of the people who live in them. As with most basic rules, the best way to have a community that is safe, clean and inviting is to demonstrate those qualities yourself. You must share the values of respect and caring with all of the members of your family in order to make your neighborhood a wonderful place. If a move is in your future—whether to another Newark Housing Authority development or utilizing a Section 8 voucher in East Orange or even to a house you own—below are some important hints on being “neighborly” for you to share with your family and friends.

- ◇ Visit the neighborhood with your family to become familiar with

street names, landmarks, shopping and schools.

- ◇ Get to know your next door neighbor, the mail carrier and the police officers who patrol the area.
- ◇ Be neighborly without being over-friendly or too aggressive.
- ◇ Become active in neighborhood associations or local organizations.
- ◇ Unless you are directly affected by the negative behavior of others, avoid becoming involved.
- ◇ Keep the exterior of your unit clean and free of trash.
- ◇ Always use trash bags placed inside of trash cans that will hold the amount of trash you want

contained. Deposit trash bags into trash cans appropriately.

- ◇ Teach your children that people are individuals with different opinions and that it's okay to be different.
- ◇ Let your neighbors know when you will be entertaining large numbers of people. They may choose not to be at home.
- ◇ If there is a dispute, approach the situation calmly, rationally and like an adult.

◇ **Sheila Scudder**



STELLA WRIGHT

A BIT OF HISTORY WITH
DORIS MCCRAY-CRANK

PART II OF II SERIES

Mid July 1967, as I watched the fires in various neighborhoods, it was like nothing I had ever seen. I remember going to 178 Prince St. to see my elderly uncle and his wife who were blind to check and see if they were okay. Six months later, February 1968, I moved into Stella Wright.

The areas inside the buildings and on the grounds were nice then, but the neighborhood was experiencing an exodus caused by escalating rents and Urban Renewal displacement—a double whammy destabilizing the neighborhood! There was a dire need for affordable housing. Screening of new residents for public housing units had stopped. Repairs were not being made. Rules and regulations were not being enforced. Drugs poured into our communities and Stella Wright began to look like a war zone.

In 1970, a group of residents emerged who called themselves The Stella Wright Christian Community Association. The group was headed by Father Toby Henry and Thom Camerford. Out of this group, the Stella Wright rent strike was born. In April 1970, the rent strike began a long hard battle between local and federal agencies. The rent strike gave a severe blow to the Newark Housing Authority, the City of Newark and, the Department of HUD.

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MEATLOAF WITH A KICK

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds of ground beef
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1/2 cup green olive, finely chopped
- 1 cup fresh bread crumbs
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- Salt & Pepper to taste
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 3/4 cup ketchup or tomato sauce
- 2 tablespoons mustard
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 4 slices bacon



PREPARATION:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and mix well. Gently shape the meat mixture into a metal 9 x 5 loaf pan. Top loaf with 4 strips of bacon. Bake for 1 hour and 10 or 20 minutes. Remove from oven and let sit for 15 minutes before slicing.

SERVES 4

ABOUT THE DEVELOPERS

St. James Community Partners, LLC

A Joint Venture Between St. James AME Church of Newark and Landex Corporation of Baltimore, Maryland

The multidisciplinary development team assembled for the Stella Wright Homes HOPE VI Revitalization Plan consists of local and national experts with the combined knowledge and experience necessary to undertake and implement this challenging, ambitious and very exciting redevelopment program. All of the national experts have been involved in numerous HOPE VI projects and more than 50 percent of the team members are minority-owned organizations from the City of Newark and its surrounding communities. Each team member has worked previously with others on the team.

- St. James AME Church is a local, faith-based organization with a 150-year active presence in the Central Ward of Newark.
- Landex Corporation is a nationally recognized 100% woman-owned real estate development company with extensive HOPE VI experience and a successful track record of creative financing, implementing and managing the transformation of large, urban, government-sponsored, troubled housing into high-quality, well-managed communities.

Roizman Development, Inc.

The Related Companies, L.P. Of New York

The proposed development team members have proven themselves in many venues throughout the country. Each member brings his/her own knowledge and experience to this initiative, forming a comprehensive, cohesive unit that can serve to strengthen and integrate all the components of this HOPE VI development. Roizman team members bring both national recognition and experience and have worked and proven themselves in Newark since 1962.

- Roizman Development, Inc. has an outstanding development track-record, financial strength and local knowledge that will enable it to direct and coordinate the development team members toward successful implementation of this HOPE VI initiative.
- The Related Companies, L.P. brings its vast knowledge and extraordinary financial capacity to this HOPE VI initiative—applying the experience gained over the 25-year course of developing and managing its 40,000 primarily affordable and market-rate housing units.

PHOTO GALLERY



Shown at press conference to announce the developers are (front row l to r): Rev. Garvey Ince, chief financial officer for St. James AME Church, former Stella Wright Residents Diana Weems, Gertrude Harris and Wade Baxter, Sr., and Judy Siegel, president of Landex Corp. (Back row l to r) David Johnston of Landex Corp. and George Smiley, Stella Wright Steering Committee.

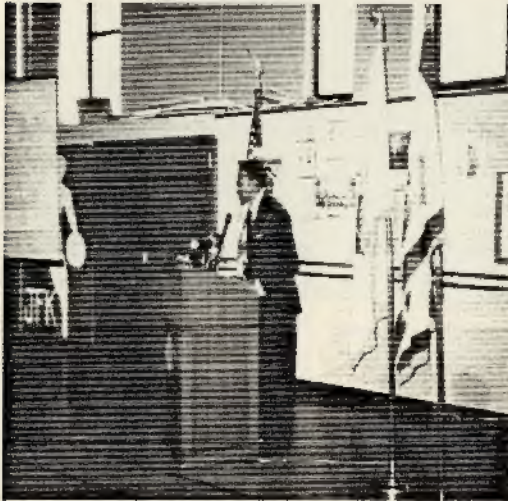


Shown here (left) is Vesta Godwin, executive director, St. James AME Social Services; (center) Judy Siegel, president of Landex Corporation; (right) Diane Johnson, state coordinator for the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.



Shown here are members of the University High School Jazz Ensemble who provided wonderful jazz sounds at the press conference. The Jazz Ensemble is under the direction of Mr. Robin Corley.

MAYOR JAMES ANNOUNCES HOPE VI DEVELOPERS



NHA Executive Director Robert Graham shown here at press conference to unveil planning design concepts for Stella Wright Homes Revitalization Project.

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He added, "The Authority, through its new construction program and its HOPE VI program, will build—on average—one unit every day for the next four years."

Among those present for the announcement of the developers were:

- NHA Board of Commissioners Ida Clark and Lynell Robinson;
- City Council Member Gayle Chaneyfield Jenkins;
- Newark Public Schools Director of Development Edwin Carmen representing superintendent Marion Bolden;
- HUD State Coordinator Diane Johnson and her staff Ed DePaula, Ken Atkinson and Fannie Woods;
- Essex County Freeholder Blonnie Watson;
- City Planning Commissioner Charon Montayne; and
- Stella Wright Consultative Group Member George Smiley.



SUMMER FUN

It's not too early to start thinking about summer activities for your children and job opportunities for the teenagers. Soon the NHA Family Services Department will begin distributing information about upcoming summer events. Much of this information is due by specific dates. Please observe the deadlines so that your children will not miss out on creative, educational and recreational experiences this summer.

For all former Stella Wright Homes (SWH) residents currently residing in NHA developments, this information will be sent to your Tenant President and the Manager of your site for distribution. Transportation will be provided by NHA's Family Services for all residents of the site participating in the activities who live beyond walking distance of the activity. For former SWH residents in Section 8 properties **who live in Newark**, the HOPE VI staff will mail this information to you as soon as it is received, and you will need to provide transportation to the events in order for your children to participate. **(If you do not live in Newark, the programs sponsored by NHA or the City of Newark are not open to your children.)**

Summer activities that are expected to be offered to NHA youth at no cost to parents may include, but are not limited to:

- Participation in Boys and Girls Clubs Life Skills and Enrichment Day Camp;
- Instruction in recreational golf and fishing;
- Overnight camping opportunities; and
- Newark School of Performing Arts programs in dance, drama and music.

You should also watch for information about summer opportunities from your child's school, notices in area news media, and activities announced at your church. Keeping your child actively involved in positive programs during the summer is critical to the quality of life of your family.

Adults are needed to volunteer for some of these activities. We will keep you informed and you should seek opportunities to share your skills and knowledge with youth in your community.

If you have questions, please contact your tenant president or site manager.

STELLA WRIGHT A BIT OF HISTORY WITH DORIS MCCRAY-CRANK

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By this time, residents were down to 400 families.

When compromise between the parties seemed unlikely, Gus Heningburg, well-known community activist, became involved in the process. His leadership and influence created the atmosphere where the issues could be discussed openly and both parties could be treated fairly.

Even though the victory was in favor of the residents, it would take a long time for renovations to take place. A \$27 million dollar grant was issued to rehabilitate the seven buildings and grounds and to allow resident management of the property. From 1974 to 1978 massive renovations to the apartments and area grounds were undertaken. But the improvements were short-lived, thus setting the stage for the next phase in Stella Wright's history.

As conditions worsened at Stella Wright and maintenance costs escalated over the next twenty years, the Newark Housing Authority reviewed the development in 1994 and decided that further investment in the property was not feasible. The Newark Housing Authority and HUD decided that the last public housing high rise looming over the City of Newark had to be demolished. In its place, residents, NHA Board of Commissioners, City Officials, school administrators, and community stakeholders are committed to rebuilding mixed-income neighborhoods that are safe, desirable and affordable for Newark's residents.

Doris McCray-Crank

NHA COMMISSIONER'S CORNER



Commissioner Gloria Cartwright is currently serving as treasurer.

NHA Board of Commissioners Member Gloria Cartwright says the vision and goals of the Stella Wright HOPE VI project are a brilliant idea and she is pleased with the concept designs she has reviewed. "It all seems workable and doable," she says. Having watched the 1967 riots as they decimated the Central Ward, she adds that she is delighted with the plans to

rebuild the neighborhoods—"it will be like a city within a city. This development is wonderful because it will upgrade the living conditions of the people in the Central Ward as well as those who might move into the neighborhood."

A commissioner since 1990, she says "the Stella Wright Homes HOPE VI plan will represent a major milestone in the agency's history once we get the construction underway. This construction is moving us into a new era in public housing."

Commissioner Cartwright currently serves on the Redevelopment, Legal, Information Technology and Personnel Committees. It was under her leadership that the current youth program at Otto Kretchmer Family was established. The program provides

after-school services once a week for the youth, and this summer, she says, they will have a six-week program to engage the children in creative and educational activities.

She and her late husband, who was a minister, first came to Newark in 1952 and, after several stays in other communities where he was pastor, they bought a home in Newark's South Ward in 1968. There they raised their four children.

She sees her job on the Board of Commissioners as providing the leadership the Housing Authority needs to adopt policies that will ensure the agency's success in providing safe, decent housing. "In addition we must have top notch staff with the skills to meet the changing needs of the agency," says Commissioner Cartwright.

GEORGE SMILEY: ON STELLA WRIGHT PROGRESS

George Smiley, member of the Stella Wright Homes Consultative Group and member of the HOPE VI Steering Committee, shown here admiring concept drawing at press conference.



When George Smiley moved out of Stella Wright Homes in 1999, he left a place he had called home for 23 years. "When I came up here from Alabama," George recalls, "the buildings were so clean it looked like you could eat off the lobby

floor."

Over the years he witnessed many fix-ups that seemed to last only a short time. At the February 21 press conference, George told reporters he was glad to have lived long enough to see the tremendous changes taking place at Stella Wright

Homes.

As a participant in the Stella Wright Homes HOPE VI Revitalization Project, George says he is happy to be a part of this history-making process. "I was glad to serve on the evaluation committee," he said. "It was a new experience for me. Before I had only read about the bids being given out."

George's challenge now is to try to get former Stella Wright residents to attend the monthly meetings and to stay informed about and to participate in the process. The next regularly scheduled former SWH tenants meeting is set for May 17, at 6 p.m. at Oscar Miles Village, 190 Court Street in the recreation room.

STELLA WRIGHT HOMES: DEMOLITION MARKS END OF AN ERA



Editor's Note: Below is an account of the future demolition of Stella Wright Homes written by Donald Moore, director of modernization, who will manage the demolition of these buildings. Donald has managed the demolition of nine other NHA sites that were destined to redefine their neighborhoods.

As I drove from the airport a few weeks ago, I looked over to my left as I crossed the bridge connecting Route 21 to Routes 1 & 9. I could clearly see the seven buildings that comprise NJ2-15—Stella Wright Homes. When they are demolished this spring, the landscape of the City of Newark will change drastically and the community as well.

Following what seems like decades of talk, the demolition of the mammoth Stella Wright Homes is finally coming to fruition. Many people have worked to redefine Stella Wright Homes into a vision of a neighborhood that will once again provide quality housing in the Central Ward. The demolition will be the next step in this visionary process.

When the Housing Authority realized that it would take at least \$100 million to renovate the 1206 units at Stella Wright but that the challenge of providing quality housing in that environment might well prove insurmountable, it decided that a new approach was required. Thus began the massive planning and partnering for a neighborhood that will thrive and inspire.

With the implosion of Stella Wright all pieces of the puzzle will be in place to move forward. So at this time let's take our hats off to the residents who understood the futility of any further renovation; to the Housing Management Staff; to the Central Maintenance Staff; to the Board of Commissioners and the Executive Staff that had some hard decisions to make and faced the issues with resolve; and finally to the Modernization Staff that has taken on the task of removing these massive structures from the landscape by implosion.

You will notice as you pass

the site there is a flurry of activity. The Housing Authority has awarded two (2) contracts for the demolition work. Demolition work south of Prince Street has been awarded to T. Fiore Demolition, Inc., Newark, New Jersey, and demolition work north of Prince Street has been awarded to Maztec Environmental, Inc., East Hanover, New Jersey. Prior to the actual implosions, both firms will be working diligently to handle environmental cleanup, using NHA residents to assist them.

Our current schedule targets the implosion of the buildings on the south April 27, 2002. Those on the north side of Prince Street are slated for implosion a month later on May 11, 2002. NHA will hold at least four (4) meetings with the neighbors on each side of the sites to discuss all aspects of the demolition.

Extra-ordinary care will be taken to keep residents and businesses advised of

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"When the Stella Wright Homes buildings are demolished this spring, the landscape of the City of Newark will change drastically."

Donald Moore

Director of Modernization

Editor's Note: If you have good news to share with other former Stella Wright Homes residents, call Nellie Dixon at 973-430-2182.

**Housing Authority of the City
of Newark**

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TRANSFORMING TODAY'S VISION INTO TOMORROW'S REALITY

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STELLA WRIGHT HOMES: DEMOLITION MARKS END OF AN ERA

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all activities related to the schedules. The residents of the Douglas Harrison Homes are especially a point of concern on the date of both implosions. Because of the closeness of the Douglas Harrison Homes, residents will have to be assisted in relocating during the hours of implosions on both days.

We anticipate the implosions to occur early Saturday morning. While we do not want to wake the Central Ward, we also do not want to interrupt the remainder of the day with re-routed traffic and water spray trucks.

The one thing that the Housing Authority cannot control is the

direction the dust will travel as a result of the implosions. We will physically protect the surrounding areas from flying debris and cover all inlet vents on air conditioning systems on both implosions.

As soon as the "all clear" signal is given on the day

of implosions, the dust clean up will start. The Authority will make every effort to return the community to a dust-free condition.

